

WILLIAM McKINLEY

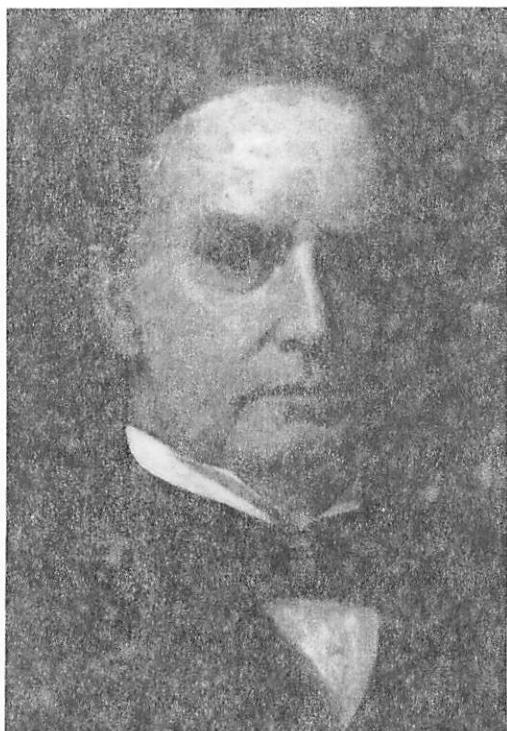
W. McKinley



B. HARRISON
23rd President
1889 — 1893



CLEVELAND
24th President
1893 — 1897



Oil painting on canvas (1900) by William T. Mathews; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



The United States flag had 41 stars when McKinley took office



T. ROOSEVELT
26th President
1901 — 1909



TAFT
27th President
1909 — 15

25TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES 1897-1901

McKINLEY, WILLIAM (1843-1901), guided the United States into the path toward world leadership. During his term, American business flourished at home and abroad, and American soldiers and sailors won the Spanish-American War. This victory made the nation a world power. Guam, Hawaii, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa all came under the Stars and Stripes.

McKinley, a Republican, succeeded Grover Cleveland, and twice defeated William Jennings Bryan for the presidency. An assassin shot McKinley six months after the start of his second term, and Vice-President Theodore Roosevelt took office. McKinley was the third President to be assassinated, and the fifth to die in office.

His friends considered McKinley tactful and charming. Others sometimes regarded him as cold and pompous, perhaps because of his rigid bearing, piercing eyes, and his tight, thin lips. He went to church regularly and lavished great care and affection upon his invalid wife. He combined a stubborn dedication to the major goals of his administration with a politician's shrewd sense for compromise. This political flexibility was demonstrated by McKinley's changing attitudes toward tariffs and silver coinage in his later years.

The number of business trusts reached a new high under McKinley, and his administration did little to enforce the antitrust laws. Cries for change from farmers, labor leaders, and other reformers received scant notice from a people enjoying newly found economic prosperity and international prestige.

Electric lights and telephones added to the excitement of McKinley's day, along with snorting "horseless carriages." The people sang such hit tunes of Gay 90's as "My Wild Irish Rose" and "Because." Lillian Russell reigned as the leading star of Broadway. The farm workers and immigrants who crowded the sprawling tenement districts of big cities worked hard and long, often 85 hours a week.

Early Life

Childhood. William McKinley was born on Jan. 1843, in Niles, Ohio, a rural town with a population about 300. A country store occupied part of the first floor of the long, two-story family home. McKinley's father, also named William, and his mother, Na Allison McKinley, were of Scotch-Irish ancestry. His great-grandfather had sailed to America from Ireland in 1743 and settled in Pennsylvania. His grandfather, James McKinley, moved to Ohio about 1800 and set up an iron foundry.

Education. William, the seventh of nine children,

— IMPORTANT DATES IN McKINLEY'S LIFE —

- 1843** (Jan. 29) Born in Niles, Ohio.
- 1871** (Jan. 25) Married Ida Saxton.
- 1876** Elected to U.S. House of Representatives.
- 1891** Elected governor of Ohio.
- 1896** Elected President of the United States.
- 1900** Re-elected President of the United States.
- 1901** (Sept. 6) Shot by assassin in Buffalo, N.Y.
- 1901** (Sept. 14) Died in Buffalo from bullet wounds.

attended school in Niles. When he was 9 years his parents decided that the school was not adequate.

The family, except his father, moved to the of Poland, near Youngstown. His father had to n in Niles for a time because of his iron-manu- facturing business.

McKinley entered the Poland Seminary, a private

school. He studied hard and recited his lessons easily.

At the age of 10, he joined the Methodist Episcopal

church. He attended Sunday school regularly, and

others hoped that he might become a bishop.

In 17, McKinley entered the junior class of Alle-

gheny College in Meadville, Pa. Severe illness soon

prevented him from returning home. He later taught briefly in

high school.

Very Under Fire. When the Civil War broke out

in 1861, McKinley was the first man in his home town

to volunteer. He became a commissary sergeant in a

regiment commanded by another future President,

MCKINLEY, WILLIAM

Rutherford B. Hayes. McKinley carried food and coffee to the regiment during the Battle of Antietam. His bravery under fire earned him a commission as second lieutenant. By the end of the war he had been promoted to brevet major.

After the war, McKinley decided to become a lawyer. He studied for about 18 months in the office of County Judge Charles E. Glidden in Youngstown. In 1866, he entered law school in Albany, N.Y. He was admitted to the bar in 1867, and began practicing law in Canton, Ohio.

Political and Public Activities

Entry into Politics. Early in life McKinley developed a strong interest in politics, and an ambition for high office. Many years later, he said: "I have never been in doubt since I was old enough to think intelligently

THE WORLD OF PRESIDENT MCKINLEY

The population was 77,600,000 in 1901. The territories of Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, shown in gray on the map, had not yet reached statehood.



WORLD EVENTS

1898—Pierre and Marie Curie isolated the element radium.

1899-1902—The British and Dutch fought the Boer War.

1899-1901—The Filipinos revolted against American rule.

1900-1901—The Boxer Rebellion flared in North China.



Boer War

Spanish-American War took place in 1898 after the sinking of the battleship *Maine* at Havana, Cuba.



The American Baseball League was organized in 1900, but did not gain recognition as a major league until 1903.

Boxer Rebellion



Puerto Rico, and the Philippines became American possessions between 1898 and 1900.



Walter Reed helped conquer typhoid fever and yellow fever with his medical experiments in Cuba.

The Klondike Gold Rush in the late 1890's brought prospectors from all parts of the world to Alaska.

